

at Hargoon has not been considered practicable on technical considerations.

Engineering Facilities

3003. SHRI SURESH KALMADI : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India has decided to market its engineering facilities world-wide and convert it into a profit centre; and

(b) if so, the modalities involved in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C. M. IBRAHIM) : (a) and (b) A multi disciplinary Market Cell has been set up to explore the possibilities of taking up jobs of maintenance, overhaul of airframes and engines etc. of domestic as well as international airlines.

Construction of Overbridge/Underbridge at Karnal Kachhwa

3004. SHRI I.D. SWAMI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a heavy traffic at the level crossing on Karnal - Kachhwa Road due to frequency of the crossing remaining closed, much hardship and inconvenience is being caused to the people;

(b) if so, whether the Government have ever studied the situation prevailing at the said railway crossing and if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether there is any proposal to construct either an overbridge or an underbridge at the above crossing to ease the congestion and for free and smooth flow of traffic; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. Government has observed that Road Over Bridge/Road under Bridge is justified.

(c) Yes, Sir. There is a proposal for construction of Road Under Bridge in lieu of level crossing No. 71-B on Karnal - Kachhwa Road.

(d) Does not arise.

Running of Train on Newly Constructed Koraput-Rayagada Line

3005. SHRI K. PRADHANI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have a proposal to run any Express/Mail passenger train on the newly constructed Koraput-Rayagada line in Orissa;

(b) if so, whether the new Express/Mail/Passenger train is proposed to be introduced during 1997-98; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (c) It is proposed to run a Koraput-Rayagada Link Express to Bhubaneswar and extend 8005/8006 Howrah-Rayagada Express to Koraput in addition to a passenger shuttle on Koraput-Rayagada section during 1997-98.

Uplinking Facilities

3006. SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN :
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :
SHRI YELLAIAH NANDI :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have decided to grant permission for uplinking facilities to foreign and domestic private satellite channels from India;

(b) if so, the details and outcome thereof;

(c) if not, the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken;

(d) whether the Government also propose to seek the help of any other agency to popularise the Doordarshan International Channel; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) to (c) The issue of permitting uplinking facilities to foreign and domestic private satellite channels is related to the question of permitting private broadcasting from within the country. This issue would be addressed to in the proposed broadcasting bill which is likely to be introduced during the current session of Parliament.

(d) and (e) To popularise the Doordarshan International channel the help of such agencies is being sought on an experimental basis, who can downlink the signals of DD-International over the footprint countries of Pan - Am - Sat - 4 and PAS-1. So far, no objection certificates have been issued to three companies namely, ATN (Canada), ASIANET (U.K. & U.S.A.), APNA TV (UK, Europe & USA).

Electronic Exchanges in Tamil Nadu

3007. SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of electronic exchanges as on date in Tamil Nadu;

(b) the number of obsolete exchanges still in operation, district-wise;

(c) the steps being taken to complete the conversion of all exchanges into electronic exchanges in the State; and

(d) the funds allocated for the purpose during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) As on 24.2.1997, 1397 electronic exchanges are working in Tamil Nadu.

(b) As on 24.2.1997, 31 non electronic exchanges are in operation in Tamil Nadu. District-wise list is given in the attached Statement.

(c) In Tamil Nadu, all non-electronic exchanges are planned for conversion into electronic exchanges during 9th five year plan period.

(d) Rs. 74.87 cores (approximately) have been allocated for Tamil Nadu for replacement of non-electronic exchanges into electronic exchanges during the current financial year 1996-97.

Statement

District-wise List of non electronic exchanges in Tamil Nadu

Sl. No.	Name of the District	No. of non-electronic exchanges
1.	Chennai	8
2.	Periyar	2
3.	Kumbakonam	1
4.	Madurai	3
5.	Kanyakumari	1
6.	Salem	3
7.	Thanjavur	1
8.	Nellai Kattabomman	3
9.	Trichy	2
10.	Ambetkar	1
11.	Villupuram SSR	1
12.	Coimbatore	1
13.	Nilguries	1
14.	Kamaraj	2
15.	Dindulgal Anna	1
Total		31

[Translation]

Cancellation of Contracts

3008. SHRI NAVAL KISHORE RAI :
PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have noticed that irregularities were committed by the previous Govt. while awarding the contracts in Railway-sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof, project-wise;

(c) whether the Government have conducted any enquiry/ investigation in this regard;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof;

(e) whether the Government have taken any decision to cancel these contracts; and

(f) if so, the details thereof along with the firms or persons to whom the contracts were awarded?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No irregularities in award of contracts at the Ministry's level have been found. However, certain irregularities in award of contracts at Zonal Railways' level have been noticed.

(b) The contracts pertain to various Railways and various departments and construction projects as well as maintenance works and not confined to any particular project.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) 154 cases have been investigated and 16 cases are still under investigation. As a result of this, 99 Gazetted staff and 121 Non-gazetted staff have been punished.

(e) Yes, Sir. 5 contracts have been cancelled.

(f) (i) Contract for painting of bridge girders on Hubli Division on M/s V.G. Gokhale, Hubli;

(ii) Contract for removal of workshop refuse in Madras on M/s Zahir Steel Trading Corporation;

(iii) Contract for supply of mineral water for Rajdhani Express on M/s Sudhanjali Corporation Calcutta;

(iv) Catering contract for Jodhpur Express on M/s ABC Enterprise;

(v) Contract for dismantling of steel structures on M/s Union Sales Corporation.